Sod is a term used to describe plugs, blocks, squares, or strips of turfgrass plus the adhering soil which are used for vegetative planting. It is also used to describe the process whereby an area is planted with turf. During the 1960’s the term sod became closely associated with the commercial sod production industry. Sodding is a term used to describe the operation of establishing a turfgrass area with sod.

The practice of sodding was described as early as the 17th century in Great Britain. Meadows and pastures containing low-growing, perennial grass species were utilized as the source of sod.

Recommendations concerning sodding at that time involved cutting the sod at a considerable depth with as much as 4 inches of soil moved with the sod. Tamping the sod following laying was stressed. It was not until the 1920’s that turfmen utilized sodding to any significant extent, however. During this period, most of the sod was obtained from sod strippers. Sod stripping is the practice of harvesting sod from pastures and similar areas which were originally established for another purpose. Also, in the 1920’s several commercial sod production operations were initiated in Michigan and New England. In contrast to sod stripping, commercial sod production, or what is sometimes referred to as nursery or cultivated sod production, encompasses the establishment, maintenance, and harvesting phases involved in producing quality sod. Much of the commercial sod production of the 1920’s and 1930’s involved bentgrass species. During this period a majority of the sod laid was obtained from sod stripping operations and was a comparatively low-quality product of high cost.

It was not until approximately 1950 that any significant expansion in the commercial sod production industry occurred. Factors which contributed to this expansion were (a) the development of a mechanical sod cutter, (b) release of improved sod forming turfgrass varieties, and (c) the availability of 2,4-D for broadleaf weed control (Johanningsmeier, 1965). Since neither the Federal nor State Crop Reporting Services included sod in their surveys, there are no accurate figures available on the sod acreage or value of the sod industry through 1968. During the 1960’s commercial sod production was one of the most rapidly expanding agricultural industries. Michigan led in the expansion of cool-season turfgrass production while Florida ranked as the leader in warm-season turfgrass production. Estimates have been